2 7 MAY 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Definition of Management Information Requirements

1. During the past several days I have had separate meetings with the Director and Deputy Director of Personnel, the Director and Deputy Director of Security, the Director and Deputy Director of Finance, the Director of Medical Services, and the Director and Acting Deputy Director of Logistics. During the next few days I have meetings scheduled with the Director and Deputy Director of Training, and with [   ] in the Clandestine Services.

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2. The purpose of these meetings is to solicit definitions of information requirements to be levied against Support Systems now being developed. All of the schools, all of the textbooks, all of the seminars, and all of the lecturers say that the first step in the development of any data processing and management information system is to get a definition of requirements. All of these people say that requirements should be defined by top management. None of the writers, teachers, or lecturers are able to say how one should go about it to get this done. I have recently attended two two day seminars offered by the Civil Service Commission which were described as being specifically intended to deal with these questions. They failed to do it and when individual speakers were asked the specific question they were unable to give a satisfactory response. If anyone has ever defined their requirements satisfactorily as the first step in a system design, it is apparently not well known nor have they developed any techniques for its accomplishment which might be used as a guide or pattern for others attempting to do the same thing. We are, therefore, venturing into an entirely new field.

3. There are data processing requirements such as computing the average salary of a particular component of the Agency and updating an inventory record. There are information retrieval requirements such as retrieving the names of all employees who are fluent in Polish or retrieving information about the current status of some stock item. For our present purposes we are not talking about either of these two kinds of requirements. We feel we know what these are now based upon our detailed analysis of the present systems. We are interested in requirements for management information which have never been articulated before. In the Human Resources area, for example, if information about the
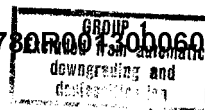
numbers of applicants being put into the pipeline by the recruiters were known
to the Director of Security in a timely fashion he would be in a better position to
allocate his resources in the [   ]Investigations Di-   25X1
vision and the Director of Medical Services would be in a better position to plan
for workloads which will be levied upon him for physical examinations. If infor-
mation were available about the numbers of people and dependents who will be
rotating to overseas assignments between May and September it would be useful
to the Office of Finance in anticipating workloads on voucher processing, and to
the Office of Medical Services in planning immunizations.

4. I have described three general ways in which Office Heads might begin
to think about their requirements:

a. We can start with the statement of Agency objectives as set forth
in the planning assumptions, goals, and objectives booklet issued by the
Office of Planning, Programming and Budgeting in January 1966. For
example:

"Develop the Agency's Logistics program to ensure the highest
degree of capability and responsiveness on a world-wide basis to
provide general and specialized Logistics support to all Agency
activities in the form of services, supplies, equipment, physical
properties, and special items utilizing advanced techniques and
equipment to meet general requirements and the highly specialized
requirements in support of Clandestine operations."

"Develop, improve and expand the Agency Medical support pro-
gram on a world-wide basis with special emphasis on meeting the
Medical support needs of staff personnel and the diverse requirements
of covert operational and intelligence collection programs through the
utilization of the most advanced developments in the fields of medicine,
psychology and psychiatry, to ensure the highest degree of manpower
concentration and the highest capability of responding to the general
and special medical requirements in support of Clandestine operations."

"Develop and expand the Agency's personnel program to ensure
the highest quality input and retention of professional personnel in the
operational, technical, intelligence production and administrative
staffs in program of the Agency utilizing such personnel." etc.

These objectives are stated in the broadest possible terms and, as
such, are relatively meaningless, even platitudinous. We must begin by

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refining these statements of objectives into some more meaningful terms against which progress toward their attainment can be measured. First of all we need to know what actions must be taken in the Logistics program to "ensure the highest degree of capability and responsiveness on a world-wide basis, " and in the Medical support program "to meet the Medical support needs of staff personnel and ensure the highest degree of manpower conservation." When we have identified more specifically the actions which have to be taken we will then be in a position to define requirements for information necessary to permit the actions to be taken toward the accomplishment of the objectives.

   b. A second way to think about requirements definition is in terms of the statements of mission and functions of the individual Support Offices. These are also very general statements which, by themselves, are not very helpful but we may be able to use them as a constructive starting point if we consider them in terms of the actions necessary to fulfill the responsibilities they prescribe, and develop from there the kinds of information needed to permit those actions to be taken. We should also try to define the kinds of information needed to make reasonable judgments about the relative success or failure of those actions.

   c. A third way to think about requirements is in terms of the performance criteria of subordinate levels of responsibility in the organizational structure. What information does the Director of an Office require in order to make reasonable judgments about whether or not the functions of his Staffs and Divisions are being performed as well as they should be. This should not be done in terms of the usual fitness reporting considerations of individual performance but rather in terms of functional performance. Is the success or failure of the recruitment function measured in terms of the number of interviews conducted by recruiters, the number of applications received, the number of applicants placed in process, or the number of applicants who actually enter on duty, or is it in terms of some combination or comparison of these separate factors. What information is needed in what kind of a time frame and with what frequency in order to permit these judgments to be made.

   5. In all of these discussions I have also used the attached chart which depicts a kind of staircase with objectives at the top; the Directors of Offices at the next lower step; information requirements at the next lower level; reporting next; data processing methods and techniques next; and data elements at the bottom. We have collected all of the data elements and we know in gross terms where they originate, where and how they are stored, how they are manipulated, and what they are used to produce. Before we can design a system of processing

methods and techniques we need to know the reporting requirements and the reporting requirements will be determined by the requirements for information specified by the Office Directors to permit them to achieve their objectives. Therefore, we must have refined statements of objectives and definitions of information requirements as the next step before we can select reporting techniques and we must know what reporting methods and techniques will be satisfactory before we can decide how the data should be processed. We must be working our way down the staircase simultaneously with our effort to move up.

6. I have also attempted to make very clear in all of these discussions the point that we are not interested in defining requirements in terms of what we may think the computer can or cannot do. I have asked that the people who will be defining these requirements do it in terms of what they need as well as what they would like to have that they have not been able to get before without regard to the computer and their estimate of its capability. When the Support System Staff gets the requirements it will be our responsibility to evaluate them and make some judgments and recommendations about how they can best be satisfied. We will suggest methods and techniques which may or may not involve the computer, give some sort of gross estimate of comparative costs and ask that the managers make the decisions about what kind of tools should be used.

7. I have said almost exactly the same things to all of the people listed in paragraph 1 and I have had almost as many differing responses as there have been discussions. I have found it extremely difficult to get people to think of information requirements in a context of their own. Despite the fact that I have repeated the enjoinder about keeping the computer out of our thinking so many times that I have felt to say it once more would be an impertinence, responses still tend to come back in terms of questions or estimates about computer capability. I have found it extremely difficult to get people to think in terms other than what they are getting now with the possible exception that they might like some variation in the output formats.

8. The Director and Deputy Director of Finance say the Support System Staff will have to define their requirements for them in consultation, of course, with their Division and Staff Chiefs. The initiative, however, will have to be

25X1 ours and [   ] has undertaken to do that. The Director of Logistics, his Executive Officer, and the Chief of the Planning Staff feel they have already defined their requirements and that the present system already gives them all the information they need except that it is difficult to collect and retrieve and cannot be made available in as timely a fashion as it should be. However, they have assigned the Assistant Executive Officer responsibility for attempting to

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develop and define additional requirements for information that it would "be nice to have." The Director of Personnel has assigned responsibility for requirements definition to his Division and Staff Chiefs and in at least one case they have come back to their representative on the Support System Staff for assistance. [   ] and his Deputy, [   ], feel that if they could get what they are now getting while it is still current they would be satisfied. [   ] says that if the Support Offices would do their jobs he would have no problems. I said that if the Support Offices could get the information they need to do their jobs they would probably have fewer problems. [   ] was highly critical of the present systems and the outputs they produce and, when I tried to encourage him to state his criticisms affirmatively in a way which would permit us to satisfy the requirements he has which the present systems fail to satisfy and cause him to be critical, he only made some derisive remarks about the misguided enthusiasms of people who try to sell new systems and new ways of doing things. I said my purpose was not to try to sell anything but that all I had in mind was to offer him the opportunity to say what his requirements for information are in order that we may make some attempt to satisfy them in the future.

9. With the exception of Dr. Tietjen and the possible exception of Howard Osborn, I have no confidence that I have successfully communicated the intent and purpose of requirements definition nor the kinds of requirements we would like to have them define. Perhaps when they have produced their first cut at this problem we will have some basis for bringing it more sharply into focus.

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Special Assistant to the
Deputy Director for Support

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Objectives

Office
Directors

Information
Require-
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Reporting

Data Process-
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and
Techniques

Data
Elements